GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4931
ANSWERED ON:19.04.2001
DIVISION OF NCRF
PRABHUNATH SINGH

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Delhi High Court sought reply by May 8, 2000 from the Centre on thealleged diversion of National Calamity Relief Fund (NCRF) by the States for other purposes and lack of monitoring by the Union Government;

(b) if so, whether the Government have submitted its reply;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General has also pointed out in its report forthe year ended March 31, 1998 cited instances of rampant misuse of relief fund;

(f) if so, the action taken against the Deputy Commissioners of Karnataka in this regard;
(g) whether there is a general belief amongst the common man of this country that the relief amount collected/donated is either misappropriated and embezzled or does not reach the needy people; and
(h) if so, the corrective steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to mitigate this belief and ensure that the relief money reaches the really needy and deserving persons?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SRIPAD Y. NAIK)

(a) A Writ Petition No.1308, Dr. B.L. Wadehra, Advocate, Delhi High Court versusUnion of India was filed in the High Court of Delhi and came up for hearing on 8.5.2000 and was defended by the Central Government Standing Counsel on behalf of theGovernment of India. The Writ Petition mentioned various irregularities such as some States not maintaining a separate CRF fund, ineffectiveness of State Level Committees(SLCs), mismanagement and embezzlement of funds by the States,delayed response in providing relief by the States, deficiencies in cash book, funds being utilised for purposes not connected with calamity etc.

(b) & (c) All relevant information was submitted to the High Court of Delhi in the form ofa Counter Affidavit informing inter-alia that it was primarily the responsibility of the State Governments concerned to provide relief and rehabilitation measures in the wake of natural calamities in the State. The Central Government only supplements the efforts ofthe State Governments by providing financial assistance from Calamity Relief Fund(CRF) and formerly National Fund for Calamity Relief(NFCR) during 1995-2000.

(d) Does not arise.

(e)The Report no.3 of 1999 submitted by the Comptroller and Auditor General of Indiamentioned the misuse of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) by various States.

(f) The jurisdiction of taking action against Deputy Commissioners of Karnataka fallswithin the purview of the Government of Karnataka.

(g) The administration and management of CRF by the State Government has by and large served the purpose for which the Fund has been created notwithstanding the fact that instances of misuse of CRF have been reported by the media in some of the States.

(h) The Government has advised the State Governments regularlyto take corrective measures on the findings of the Comptroller and Auditor General and avoid recurrence of such events in future. Further, on the basis of the recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission, the Scheme of CRF has been modified on 24th, November, 2000incorporating certain mandatory conditions which are to be fulfilled before the Centre`s share of CRF is released to the State Governments, which inter-alia include constitutionof a separate CRF by the State and certification by the Accountant General of the State,furnishing of a certificate by the State that the amount received earlier has been credited to the Fund alongwith the State`s share of contribution accompanied by a statement giving the up-to-date expenditure and the balance amount available in the CRF. The States have also been advised about the items of expenditure and norms of assistance expenditure on which alone is chargeable from CRF. The States are also required to submit a report every year to the Central Government in a prescribed proforma on the natural calamities occurring in the States.